

- Rana papua*, part., Bouleng. Cat. Batr. Ecaud. p. 64 (1882); Roux, Abh. Senck. Ges. xxxiii. 1910, p. 224.  
*Rana arfaki*, part., van Kampen, Bijdr. Dierk. xix. 1913, p. 90.  
*Rana fallax*, van Kampen, Nova Guinea, ix., Zool. p. 459 (1913).

*Hab.* New Guinea and neighbouring islands (Waigeou [type], Aru, Kei, Timor Laut, Fergusson, Murray, &c.).

I am unable to express an opinion on the specimens from Jobi, referred to this species by Barbour, Mém. Mus. Comp. Zool. xlv. 1912, p. 65, pl. v. fig. 15, in which the male is provided with a humeral gland.

### 9. *Rana daemeli*.

- Hylorana erythræa*, part., Günth. Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (3) xx. 1867, p. 56.  
*Hylorana daemeli*, Steind. Sitzb. Ak. Wien, lvii. i. 1868, p. 532, pl. —.  
*Hylarana nebulosa*, Macleay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W. ii. 1877, p. 137.  
*Rana papua*, part., Bouleng. Cat. Batr. Ecaud. p. 64 (1882), and Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (5) xvi. 1885, p. 387; Roux, Abh. Senck. Ges. xxxiii. 1910, p. 224.  
*Hyla nobilis*, De Vis, Proc. R. Soc. Queensl. i. 1884, p. 129.  
*Rana daemeli*, Garman, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. xxxix. 1901, p. 14; Bouleng. Tr. Zool. Soc. xx. 1914, p. 250.  
*Rana novæ-guinææ*, van Kampen, Nova Guinea, ix., Zool. p. 37, pl. ii. fig. 5 (1909), and p. 459 (1913).

*Hab.* Northern Queensland (type) and New Guinea.

## XXVII.—Some Notes on the small Sand-Foxes of North Africa. By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

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WHILE attempting to determine a small fox from Nigeria presented some years ago to the National Museum by Mr. (now Sir John) Eaglesome, I have come upon certain points in the nomenclature and relationships of what Mr. de Winton\* has called the "sand-foxes" which it seems advisable to record for the saving of future trouble.

The species dealt with are three in number—namely, the widely distributed animal usually known as *Vulpes famelica*, the smaller *V. pallida* of the Egyptian Soudan, and the true Fennec.

\* P. Z. S. 1899, p. 544.

With regard to the last-named, I have again studied the account given by Skiöldebrand\* of the animal he calls "*Vulpes minimus saarensis*," with a view to determining if that name would have to be adopted. For, if it would, very serious results might follow as to the generic name of the common foxes, owing to the fact that no earlier use is valid of the genus name *Vulpes*, of which the fennec would therefore be the type, to the exclusion of the common fox, usually called *Vulpes vulpes*. Palmer † has given the facts, but, owing to his accepting the earlier *Vulpes* of Frisch, now generally rejected, the importance of the status of Skiöldebrand's name does not appear.

But I think the latter may be rejected as being merely a Latin rendering of "small Saharan fox," for the author says he does not know which Linnean genus to put his animal into, as he has not been able to examine its teeth. He therefore, by his own showing, uses no generic name, but calls it by a combination which is not on the binomial system at all, and is polynomial and therefore invalid. Moreover, no *Vulpes minimus* existed, of which *saarensis* could have been taken as a varietal or subspecific addendum, as we are accustomed to do in the case of Kerr's and other early authors' trinomials. *Fennecus zerda*, Zimm., should therefore be the name of the fennec, thus leaving *Vulpes*, as a generic name, available for the true foxes, with *V. vulpes* as genotype.

Passing to the more fox-like species, the first name to be considered is Schinz's *Canis rüppelli* ‡, of which Mr. de Winton says that it has been "generally referred" (I do not know by whom) to Rüppell's *Canis famelicus*, but that he "has no hesitation" in assigning it to *Canis pallidus*. I regret that in this conclusion I am quite unable to agree with him.

Schinz based his name on specimens sent by Rüppell from Dongola, in the Nubian desert, seen by him in the Frankfort Museum, so that the Cretzschmar descriptions of Rüppell's animals would include the type or co-types of *rüppelli*. Now from Cretzschmar's account it appears that *famelicus* was represented by seven specimens which had been obtained partly in the "nübischen Wüsten" (in which Dongola lies) and partly in Kordofan, quite a distinct locality, while the three examples of *pallidus* were all from Kordofan, the

\* K. Vet.-Ak. Handl. xxxviii. p. 265 (1777).

† Index Gen. Mamm. p. 708 (1904).

‡ Cuv. Thierr. iv., Supp. p. 508 (1825).

species not occurring further north. Thus Schinz's Dongola is only applicable to the *famelicus*.

Furthermore, while the description given of the colours is equally applicable to either, the statement "Schwanz länger als der Körper" is quite decisive of the question, for, while the tail is about the length of the body in *famelicus*, it is quite conspicuously shorter in *pallidus*, as is shown by Rüppell's measurements of the specimens described.

I feel, therefore, so sure of this conclusion that I propose to call the larger species, with long white-tipped tail, *Vulpes rüppelli*, in place of *V. famelica*, leaving *pallida* for the smaller species with short black-tipped tail.

And it would appear from de Winton that earlier authors have come to the same conclusion, although they have not seen the necessity of superseding *famelicus* by *rüppelli*. The Somali form of *rüppelli* is subspecifically distinguished below.

Next comes *V. dorsalis*, Gray, from Senegal, placed in this group by de Winton, who synonymizes Rochebrune's *V. edwardsi* with it.

The type of *dorsalis* is a mere puppy, but by extracting the germ of its first upper molar I am able to form a judgment as to where the species belongs. This tooth is no less than 10 mm. in antero-posterior length, which shows at once that the animal is not one of these small foxes at all, but would have attained the size of one of the large true foxes. It is therefore probably related to *V. nilotica* and *atlantica*. The corresponding measurement in *rüppelli* is rarely 8 mm., and in *pallida* 7-7.3 mm.

As a consequence, Rochebrune's *V. edwardsi* will be valid as a name for the small Senegal fox, which I believe to be a local subspecies of *V. pallida*; and I should provisionally refer the Nigerian fox to the same western subspecies.

The following seems worthy of a special subspecific name:—

*Vulpes rüppelli somaliæ*, subsp. n.

Size and other essential characters as in true *rüppelli*, but the back greyer, the median dorsal line less prominent and less strongly ochraceous, while the area on each side of it is more definitely grey—even blue-grey. Fur rather shorter and coarser, without the extreme softness characteristic of the Egyptian animal.

Dimensions of type (measured in the flesh):—

Head and body 445 mm.; tail 345; hind foot 120; ear 100.

Skull: greatest length 109; condylo-basal length 106; front of canine to back of  $m^2$  49.5; antero-posterior diameter of  $m^1$  externally 7.

*Hab.* N. Somaliland. Type from near Berbera.

*Type.* Adult female. B.M. no. 97. 8. 9. 10. Original number 1. Collected 3rd December, 1896, and presented by Dr. A. E. Atkinson. Five specimens examined.

There is always much variability in the colour of these foxes, but the harsher fur, the increase in the grey of the sides of the back, and the decrease of the ochraceous along the spine are so generally characteristic of the Somali specimens in comparison with the Egyptian as to make a subspecific name for the former advisable.

XXVIII.—*Platymycterus*, a new Genus of Asiatic Curculionidæ (Coleopt.). By GUY A. K. MARSHALL, D.Sc.

THE genus *Corigetus*, Desbr.,\* belongs to Lacordaire's group *Cyphicerides*, and, as defined by Faust (Stett. Ent. Zeit. 1890, p. 67), comprises a number of Oriental species. As it stands at present, it obviously contains various discordant elements, and will no doubt eventually be broken up into several genera. It is here proposed to separate off from it a small and homogeneous group of species that are related to *Corigetus jeæ*, Fst., a native of Burma and Assam.

PLATYMYCTERUS, gen. nov.

Rostrum broad, almost flat above and lying in the same plane with the forehead, the sides straight or only slightly dilated at the apex; the scrobes short, apical and completely dorsal in position, subtriangular, broadly and abruptly delimited behind, the basal width almost equal to the length, and the space between them equal to or less than half the width of the forehead; the process forming the covering of the antennal socket convex, bare and shiny, appearing almost as if it were the actual condyle of the antenna; the epistome short, deeply and angularly emarginate in front, its hind margin forming a low rounded ridge, not sharply carinate, the angle being a right angle or less and ending a little

\* Desbrochers, 'Abeille,' xi. 1873, p. 746 (1874); Faust, Deut. Ent. Zeit. 1885, p. 167; Reitter, Deut. Ent. Zeit. 1900, p. 62.